

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 148275

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

UNCLAS STATE 148275

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:OVIP, CVIS, OEXC

SUBJECT: CUSTOMS AND RELATED COURTESIES FOR FOREIGN
OFFICIALS VISITING OR TRANSITING THE UNITED
STATES

1. THE DEPARTMENT DESIRES TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF ALL TRAVEL TO THE US BY FOREIGN OFFICIALS WHO SHOULD RECEIVE APPROPRIATE CUSTOMS COURTESIES OF THE PORT ON ENTERING THE COUNTRY. POSTS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT US AUTHORITIES WILL AUTOMATICALLY PROVIDE COURTESIES ONLY TO HOLDERS OF ALL CLASSES OF DIPLOMATIC VISAS. EVEN A DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT MUST BEAR A DIPLOMATIC VISA TO GUARANTEE THAT SUCH COURTESIES WILL BE EXTENDED. IN ORDER TO ASSURE AN APPROPRIATE RECEPTION OF A FOREIGN DIGNITARY BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS THE DEPARTMENT MUST PLACE A REQUEST IN ADVANCE FOR SUCH COURTESIES THROUGH CUSTOMS IN WASHINGTON.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 148275

2. POSTS ARE ASKED TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO TRAVEL BY FOREIGN OFFICIALS OR THEIR CLOSE RELATIVES UNDER OTHER VISA CATEGORIES, PARTICULARLY CU GRANTEES, AND TO NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NEED FOR COURTESIES OF THE PORT WHEN

SUCH COURTESIES ARE APPROPRIATE TO THE RANK OR STATUS OF AN OFFICIAL OR WOULD PROPERLY RECIPROCATATE HOST COUNTRY PRACTICES TOWARD HIGH-RANKING AMERICAN OFFICIALS. A TYPICAL PROBLEM THAT CAN OCCUR MIGHT BE AN IMPORTANT SUBCABINET OFFICIAL WHO IS A CU LEADER GRANTEE TRAVELING TO THE US WITH A J VISA. SINCE THE VAST MAJORITY OF J'S ARE STUDENTS, A CUSTOMS OFFICIAL WOULD HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT THE OFFICIAL SHOULD BE ACCORDED ANY COURTESIES, AND IN ANY CASE THE INDIVIDUAL INSPECTOR AT THE PORT OF ENTRY WOULD NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY HIMSELF TO DECIDE ON ENTITLEMENT TO SUCH COURTESIES. AS POSTS ARE AWARE, A PARTICULARLY HEAVY VOLUME AT JFK CAN CAUSE DELAYS IN CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION PROCESSING, WHICH CAN BE ALLEVIATED TO SOME DEGREE BY HAVING THE DEPARTMENT REQUEST COURTESIES IN ADVANCE.

3. WASHINGTON EMBASSIES HAVE ALSO BEEN REMINDED OF THE NEED TO NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT IN ADVANCE OF TRAVEL BY FOREIGN OFFICIALS WHO WOULD NOT AUTOMATICALLY BE ENTITLED CUSTOMS AND RELATED COURTESIES. KISSINGER

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